

**Executive Committee for Highway Safety  
Speed Working Group  
Meeting Minutes; Mtg. #8  
August 4, 2005**

**Location:**

Triangle Transportation Management Center, Trenton Road @ 1:00 p.m.

**Committee Members in Attendance:**

Kevin Lacy	Joe Geigle	Cpt. Glidewell	Charlie Jones
Doug Robertson	Jay Gaither	Haywood Daughtry	Ebony Pittman
Ron Allen	Tony Wyatt	Ken Ivey	Terry Hopkins
Cliff Braam			

**Scribe:**

Cliff Braam

**Minutes:**

- The meeting began at approximately 1:05 p.m.

**Task I – Safe Speed Act Legislation**

Doug gave an overview of his conversation with Jim Harden (former D.A. in Durham County) concerning the Safe Speed Act strategy.

- In Durham, processing 500 – 700 cases per day or about 63,000 cases per year. About 40,000 of these are traffic related.
- Would welcome an administrative process since his biggest challenges are resource related (not enough people).
- Very important that whatever is done, that the D.A.s and judges have some discretion.
- Important to have a D.A. representative on the working groups and the ECHS.

Jay Gaither (D.A. from Burke, Caldwell and Catawba Counties) provided some general comments from his perspective.

- Conducting District Court 7 days a week.
- On a recent Monday, 220 cases were for speeding with 33 of them for 90+ mph.
- Penalties are disproportionate with the speeds. For example, speeding 5 mph over in a 25 mph zone carries the same penalty as speeding 5 mph over in a 70 mph zone.
- Other states have fine structure based upon how far over the speed limit the violator is cited for with the fine being \$10.00 for each mph over the posted limit.
- Violators should pay the fine for the infraction they are cited for instead of the infraction they may plea to. For example, if cited for speeding, and they plea to an improper equipment, then they should pay the fine for speeding.

Doug – Reviewing AOC records shows that for those charged with speeding, 25% of them convicted of “improper equipment”. For all speeding citations, 49% of them were reduced to less than the original charge.

Kevin – ECHS has asked this group to draft legislation to handle speeding citations administratively.

There was mention that the fines outlined in the existing strategy, need to be increased, especially at the higher level offenses.

Jay volunteered to rewrite the strategy and to draft the needed legislation along with solicited help from group members and others.

## **Task II – Legislation for Compliance Dismissals**

The group discussed the problems associated with compliance dismissals and how this is a big drain on court resources that are not directly recuperated.

Jay volunteered to draft legislation to fund the court cost for these items.

Ken volunteered to write up the strategy.

## **Task III – Photo Enforcement for Speed**

The group discussed the possibility of pursuing expanding Charlotte’s photo speed enforcement program. Areas where this was deemed to be applicable were 1) Work Zones, 2) School Zones and 3) Safety Zones as designated by the Secretary of DOT.

Charlie mentioned that the group may want to include Neighborhoods too as Charlotte gets numerous requests for this on a regular basis.

Charlie also gave the group an update on Charlotte’s program.

- Been in operation for one year now.
- 30,000 citations issued.
- 161 appeals.
- Only 9 appeals upheld.
- Legislation to extend the program to 6/30/07 has passed.
- Charlotte now looking at a van set up that will utilize two cameras so that vehicles in two lanes can be monitored simultaneously. They anticipate deploying these by the end of this year.
- There is continued strong public support in Charlotte for this program.
- The ITRE speed study should be completed September 2005.
- 67% of Charlotte residents favor the program.
- 70% of them feel speeding is a major threat to potential safety.
- 89% of them are aware of the program.

#### **Task IV – Statewide Pace Car Program**

The concept of a pace car program for state employees was discussed again. A Statewide Pace Car Program would recruit state employees people to voluntarily travel within the posted speed limit on all roadways. This is a way state employees can join together and set a good example for other drivers, with the intent being for these drivers to act as pace cars by driving at the posted speed limit and limiting the opportunities for those behind them to drive in excess of the speed limit.

The group discussed that state employees should not just partake in this program while in state owned vehicles but also while driving their personal vehicles too. This strategy was tabled for now, although Kevin did challenge the group members to obey the speed limits.

#### **Task V – Design Speed for Signalized Intersections**

There have recently been changes in clearance intervals for signalized intersections.

In the equation that is used to determine the clearance interval, typically the posted speed is used unless a speed study has been done. Then the 85% speed is used up to 10 mph over the posted speed; whichever is higher.

Need opinions of the group and their staff as to this practice.

If we are timing signals for people who are violating the law (i.e. using 85% speed to establish clearance interval when it is higher than the posted speed limit) are we encouraging speeding?

We need to delve into what we need to do as a state for this practice.

Need to get the opinion of state and local law enforcement.

We need to get the opinion of the FHWA.

#### **Task VI – Improper Equipment on Driver's Record**

At a earlier meeting, it was noted that when someone gets a speeding charge reduced to a “improper equipment” charge, this does not appear on their driving record. Therefore, the next time they are in court for a speeding violation, the D.A. does not have a record of their previous offense.

The group agreed that we still need to pursue this at a later date.

- The meeting was adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

**Action Items:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Item</b>
Jay	Draft legislation for Safe Speed Act and modify existing strategy as needed to comply with legislation.
Jay	Check with Tom Keith to see if he has draft legislation for “Compliance Dismissals”. If not, then draft appropriate legislation for review by the group.
Ken	Write up a strategy for Compliance Dismissals and send out to the group for review. Coordinate with Jay so that the strategy and legislation match.
Kevin	Draft strategy for increased use of Photo Enforcement for Speed.
Terry	Contact Priscillia Tobias and obtain a copy of their legislation for photo speed enforcement.
Doug	Explore setting up a task order to examine how other states set their design speed at signalized intersections.
Charlie/Ken	Talk with staff about design speed for signalized intersections.

NEXT MEETING: TBD